

John Reich Journal

Volume 25 / Issue 2

July 2015



The purpose of the Jahn Reich Collectors Society (JRCS) is to encourage the multi-of nature against projection by United States and and silver constrained before the more furnishing of the Sected Fiberty design, and to provide technique of the Sected Fiberty design, and to provide technique of the Sected Fiberty design, and to provide technique of the Sected Fiberty design.

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The fram Royal derivates the official publication of the Society and is distributed to all manufacturing contentions. Members are encouraged to submit any articles encouraging the submit any articles encouraging the submit and or relating to early United States gold and silver coins to the carrier to provide the exact and or relating to early United States gold and silver coins to the carrier to provide the entrange of the carrier to the

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force plane. The corr planed in the front and back cover of the Journal is the observe one issues of the nadely discovered 1805. "If any 3" 4-8. BB-25" silver dollar die marriage. This new die marriage has differented in 1914, and pairs a previously unknown observe die to a known recesse die. The reverse die area (too previously in arriking the 1803 B-6, BB-255 marriage. The key discovered overseen die is the recenting of the 1" in 1 BERTY at and below in marriage.

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John Reich Journal

Official publication of the John Reich Collectors Society

Volume 25 / Issue 2

July 2015

Whole No. 76

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Editor's Comments

The issue of the formal simulal reachy on use before you leave for the ANA convenion in Storage. The original control of the RCS with occur on Wednesday morning at 8:30 in the Stephens convention control Place black the directory for the count number. We will be conducting the business of the ascrete mediums also mut officers; they make the anomalies and an educational presentation. This way one of our neighbors current view of the speaking. His presentation will be A Numeronate Martings, Bust concluding an American Paper Money. This was inspired by David Davis' research and article in an early susteen the 192.

Fluve been informed by Richard Meaney, our HOF committee chair, that the inductees for this year are Marini Euther Beistle for the veteran category and Allen F. Lovejoy for the modern category.

There was an omission from the last journal. Sheridan Downey's article Reflections on Robert Hit = 1794 Octo9 Flowing Hair Half-Dollar came through without his footnotes. They are included here for completion

Die Leitenses in Lucly United States Coms by Robert P. Hill II. p.15 (RTS Publishing Co. 1980), hereafter, "Hill p. ."

Turn Schetz was a brifant and compassonate mar. We shared a low of natural bistory, as well as a fiscention for the postgious shart dot our planet. In 1996 he mixed me to join him on an expedition to the Kimberley, part of the Outsteen is motivated.

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Office 15 Compression Coopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coms by Walter Breen, p. 375, referencing Breen no. 4551

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Description of the control of the Related Issues by Andrews Pol ock, III, p. 20 (Bowers & Merena Galleries, Inc. 1994)

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Dime Collectors

It is line, to send your information for inclusion in the next census. Please send you information to Jim Matthews at bustdollar a yahoo.com or by snail mail to:

PO Box 1118, Mt. Jackson, VA 22842.

Tomtake my tob easier the format for your submissions should be as follows;

P45 for PCGS XF-45 N45, NGC EF45 A45 ANACS45 R45 for raw 45

Cuds should be noted as RC or FC for retained cud and full cud.

Results will be published in the next issue of the journal.

Please have your submissions to me by October 1st to allow enough time to format the results.

David Hart Jr., April 10, 1799 - April 3, 1862 By David Finkelstein

I purchased a low grade and holed 1799 Bust Dollar, with *obverse graffiti*, at the January, 2013 FUN Show. See Figure 1. Engraved on the obverse was "David Hart Born April 10". See Figure 2.



The Salem Witch Connection

I Googled "David Hart Born April 10" and "David Hart 1799", not expecting to find much, if anything. I was directed to www.myhartt.com, the site for descendants of Isaac and Elizabeth (Hutchinson) Hart. Isaac Hart was born around 1614 in Suffolk Shire, England. He emigrated to America in 1636 and eventually settled in Watertown, Massachusetts in 1642.1° Elizabeth Hutchinson was born in 1622 in Lynn, Massachusetts. She married Isaac Hart in 1650. In 1692, at the age of 70, Elizabeth Hutchinson Hart was accused of witcheraft by 12 year old Ann Putnam Jr. and 17 year old Mary Wolcott; two key accusers of the Salem Witch Trials. Elizabeth Hutchinson Hart served 7 months in a Boston prison from May. 1692 through December, 1692.3°

David L Hart Jr. was born to David & Lucy Page Hart on April 10, 1799 in Dublin. New Hampshire. He died April 3, 1862 and was buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Brighton, Massachusetts. David Hart Jr. was the great great great grandson of accused Salem witch Elizabeth Hutchinson Hart. The genealogy tree is as follows:

- 1 Isaac Hart (b. 1614) married Elizabeth Hutchinson (b. 1622) in 1650.
- 2. Son Adam Hart (b. 1666) married Elizabeth Collson (b. 1677) around 1703.
- 3. Grandson Thomas Hart (b. 1707) married Abigail Brown (b. 1719/1720) in 1737.
- 4 Great Grandson Daniel Hart (b. 1748) married Bethiah MacKintire (b. 1748) in 1771
- Great Great Grandson David Hart (b. 1773) married Lucy Page (b. 1776) in 1796.
 Great Great Great Grandson David Hart Jr. (b. April 10, 1799) was probably given
- This alone makes the 1799 holed Bust Dollar a great conversation piece. What makes

This alone makes the 1799 holed Bust Dollar a great conversation piece. What makes this Boled Bust Dollar even more special is the following.

The Royalty Connection

Accused Salem witch Elizabeth Hutchinson Hart's mother (David Hart Jr's great great

If my genealogy is correct, David Hart Jr. was Princess Diana's great gr

The genealogy tree from Anne Browne Hutchinson to Lady Diana is as follows:

- 1. Anne Brown Hutchinson (b. 1591) married Adam Hawkes (b. 1605) about 1631.
- 2. Daughter Susannah Hawkes (b. 1633) married William Cogswell (b. 1618) in 1649 or 1650
- Granddaughter Hester Cogswell (b. 1650) married Samuel Bishop (b. 1645) in 1675.
- 4. Great Grandson Samuel Bishop (b. 1677) married Sarah Fobes (b. 1684) in 1704 or 1705.
- 5. Great Great Grandson Caleb Bishop (b. 1715 or 1716) married Keziah Hibbard (b. 1722) in 1739
- Great Great Great Granddaughter Lucy Bishop (b. 1747) married Benjamin Strong (b. 1740) in 1769.
- Great Great Great Grandson Joseph Strong (b. 1770) married Rebecca Young (b. 1779) in 1796.
- Great Great Great Great Granddaughter Eleanor Strong (b 1802) married John Wood (b, 1785) in 1823.
- Great Great Great Great Great Granddaughter Fllen Wood (b. 1831) married Franklin Work (b. 1819) in 1857.
- 10. Great Great Great Great Great Great Great Granddaughter Frances Work (b. 1857) married James Boothby Burke-Roche (b. 1851) in 1880
- 11. Great Great Great Great Great Great Great Great Grandson Edmund Maurice Burke-Roche (b. 1885) married Ruth Gill (b. 1908) in 1931.
- 12. Great Granddaughter Frances Ruth Burke-Roche (b. 1936) married Edward John Spencer (b. 1924) in 1954.
- Great Great

On second thought, my opening sentence is incorrect... "obverse graffiti", I think not!!!

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Cuds on Early Dimes—Part 1 By Jim Matthews

I have been collecting cuds on early dimes for many years and have a fairly advanced collection at this point. In an effort to publicize the contents of my collection 130 include photos of various pieces if I have them, and will provide these to the John Reich Journal in future articles. First of all the word "cud" has been numismatically adopted to describe a coin struck from dies with a portion of one of the dies broken in such a manner that the fields are no longer even. Normally the broken part of the die is pushed down from the surrounding die surface by the pressures and dynamics section is softly struck compared to the surrounding unbroken area. Most cuds begin as cracks which extend to the edge and encompass some part of a device, usually to the coinage, the cracks may join other cracks and a small section of the die may start to push away from the die surface—this is what I consider to be a retained cud. In the final state, the cud piece may have fully chipped off the die, leaving that area of the struck, and these coins are considered to have "full cuds". When the cud area on a coin shows no die definition, this is often the result of circulation wear focused on an area of the coin that was already weakly struck, and a study of the opposing area strike on cud die. Full cuds are quite rare in any series, and the coiners at the mint were likely rained to retire dies that exhibit significant chips once they formed on a particular die.

It appears that reverse dies that were severely cracked continued in use until a cod formed (possibly as Mint policy) as postulated by Russell Logan, as more terminal conditions that the past few decades, leaving only a handful of reverse dies without a known cud forming by the time of the dies replacement. See Appendix B in the dime book on page 294 for a listing of all known reverse dies out their sequence of use. A few more remarriages are now known in this exhibited sequence. The survival rate today on Capped Bust dimes was probably in the 3-6 percent of those coined, if indeed that many, so if severely broken die with a full cud struck 100 coins before replacement, it is entirely possible that no more than a few gena, and as many early dimes are known in extremely worn condition, the surviving till and examples may not be recognizable—indeed if they even exist today. I marvel at the number of cuds that do exist sometimes when I contemplate those I've been able to obtain over the last three decades.

While the first listed cud is the 1796 JR-1 dime, I consider this an unusual form of die damage where a defect in the die steel collapsed and formed a blob from the rim to the

first star. This feature is known on all but two or three examples from these dies, and is quite commonly seen as this is the most available die marriage of 1796 dimes. The 1796 JR-3 develops a small edge cud to the top of T2 (first T in STATES) from the rim. This cud begins as die cracks, but eventually the edge piece chips away. I have seen, but do not own, an example of this rare cud. The 1797 JR-1 is one of the more dramatic die cracks in this series and forms a very late retained cud at the end of the production run. The crack extends on the obverse from the second star across the tops of the date and out through the bust to the rim. This piece loosens over time and nearly blanks out the date after moderate circulation wear, and all known 1797 JR-1 (Sixteen obverse stars) dimes exhibit this crack. The next intriguing die condition comes on the 1798 JR-4 dime, where late in its production a small chip connects the second feather down on the left wing of the eagle to the rim. Curiously this same die went on to strike the 1800 JR-1 dimes which all exhibit this feature of the die chip to the rim from the second feather down to the rim. Several edge dentils are also chipped away on this latest use of the reverse die.

1802 is an interesting year for cuds as both known obverse dies have representative cuds develop. The first cud is on the 1802 JR-2, this is believed to be a remarriage of these dies struck after the 1802 JR-3 (which used the same obverse die). On this remarriage of the JR-2 variety, the dies were misaligned and the lower right portion of the obverse is exceptionally sharp while the upper left is weakly impressed. This caused uneven pressure on the obverse die and the die shattered with a long section breaking away through portions of the date and bust. The only known example is pictured here. Some imbecile long ago tried to peel back the cud portion at the date and left some scratches in that attempt, but the coin speaks for itself. Identification of the reverse confirms it is the JR-2 variety with the long arcing crack visible through the shield despite considerable wear.





1802 JR2

The second cud obverse die of 1802 is the JR-4 and this obverse die cracks late in its life from the rim through the base of star 7, below LI, touching B and up through E to the rim. This section is clearly weaker than the surrounding struck portion of the coins. The finest example with the crack well developed was sold in the Ed Price Collection (July, 2008) by Heritage as Lot #1435, earlier from the William Subjack Collection. Perhaps four to six examples are known with the advanced crack. I don't have a picture of the example in my collection, but will provide it soon for reference.

Dime production for the year 1803 saw ample die cracks, and one of the most dramatic is noted on my low grade JR-3 coin. Cracks formed through the 0, and the area left of the crack sank away from the die surface enough to cause uneven wear. The JR-4 variety is known for one of the most complex displays of die cracks, and all known examples exhibit these cracks, which formed during the production of the 1802 JR-2 dimes. The re-use of this reverse is a clear indication that cracks alone were not always the reason to retire dies from production.

The dimes of 1804, 1805 and 1807 do not develop cuds, as far as I know.





1803 JR-3

Analysis of the 1815 Half Dollar Underdigit By Garrett Ziss, David Finkelstein and Dr. Charles Link Jr.

In Volume 25 / Issue 1 of the John Reich Journal, I wrote about the discoveries and the lessons that I learned from reading Dr. Henry Hilgard's JRJs and Bust Half Fever. But that's not the end of the story. There was one discovery I did not mention in the article because it required further investigation.

As I read Volume 8 / Issue I, I noticed that Dr. Hilgard placed a sticky note on page 15, on an article entitled "Obverse Die Dentil Analysis Part I - Capped Bust Halves 1807-1819". His sticky note read "1815/5 (?)". I was curious whether Dr. Hilgard's theory had ever been investigated, so I contacted the author of the article, David Finkelstein, to get more information.

Mr. Finkelstein replied to my e-mail by saying, "When Henry Hilgard wrote 1815/5, he meant 1815 / Inverted 5" (similar to the 1806/9 half dollar, which is an 1806 over inverted 6). He thought that Dr. Hilgard's theory was interesting and should be investigated.

First, let's review Mr. Finkelstein's "Obverse Die Dentil Analysis" article from 1993. He wrote the following for the 1815/2 Capped Bust Half Dollar:

"There are 109 dentils on 1815/2 Obverse 1 (O-101). This is inconsistent with the range of dentils on 1812 halves (104-107) and more consistent with the range of dentils on halves dated 1817 and later. Based on dentil count alone, the 1815/2 Obverse Die cannot be linked to a leftover 1812 Obverse die. Although this is not conclusive evidence, I am speculating that the 1815/2 half was not prepared from a leftover 1812 Obverse die, but from a blundered Obverse die prepared in 1815."

A blundered 1815 obverse die could only be one of the following:

- a.) A 5 was punched into the die upside down. The engraver realized his mistake, and then punched a 5 on top of the inverted 5.
- b.) A 2 was punched into the die upside down. The engraver realized his mistake, and then punched a 5 on top of the inverted 2.
- c.) A 2 was punched into the die first. The engraver realized his mistake, and then punched a 5 on top of the 2.

To determine which digit was under the 5, Mr. Finkelstein proposed 3 comparisons:

a.) compare an inverted 5 from an 1815 Half Dollar against the underdigit, b.) compare an inverted 2 from an 1812 Half Dollar against the underdigit, and c.) compare a 2 from an 1812 Half Dollar against the underdigit.

It was important to use high grade uncirculated coins for the images because the 5 and the digit under the 5 would not have been affected by wear. Mr. Finkelstein obtained the 1812 and 1815 coin images from Dr. Charles Link Jr., as he owns superb uncirculated examples of these Capped Bust Half Dollars.

The left image in Figure 1 is the 5 (and underdigit) from Dr. Link's 1815 PCGS MS65-Capped Bust Half Dollar. Arrows have been added in the right image to identify the outline of the underdigit. The left image in Figure 2 is just the 2 from one of Dr. Link's uncirculated 1812 Capped Bust Half Dollars. The right image in Figure 2 is just the 5 from Dr. Link's 1815 uncirculated Capped Bust Half Dollar.

Figure 3 compares the 5 (and underdigit) against the inverted 5. Figure 3 shows that the 1815 is not an 1815 over an inverted 5. Figure 4 compares the 5 (and underdigit) against the inverted 2. Figure 4 shows that the 1815 is not an 1815 over an inverted 2.

Figure 5 contains 3 images of the right side up 2 overlaid on the 5 (and underdigit) from Dr. Link's coin. Transparency increases from right to left. The left image in Figure 6 is the 5 (and underdigit) from Dr. Link's coin. The right image is Transparency Stage 2 from Figure 5.

I paire 6 shows that the 1815 Capped Bust Half Dollar is indeed an 1815 over 2. I have to admit. I was disappointed that the evidence did not support Dr. Hilgard's thoog from 1815. Inverted 5 Capped Bust Half Dollar. Throughout the years, it has been anneally thought that the digit under the 5 on the 1815 Capped Bust Half Dollar was a 2. As far as I am aware, this is the first time the underdigit has been investigated. This research was possible thanks to the collaboration of Mr. Finkelstein and Dr. Link, and the combination of computer technology and high grade uncirculated coins.

If the 1815 2 was prepared from a blundered obverse die in 1815, we now know what bappened: a 2 was punched into the die first. The engraver realized his mistake, and then punched a five on top of the 2. However, the fact that the 1815 Capped Bust Half Dollar is an 1815 2 does not eliminate the possibility that it was prepared from a leftover 1812 obverse die. This issue will be discussed in a future JRJ article.

To be continued

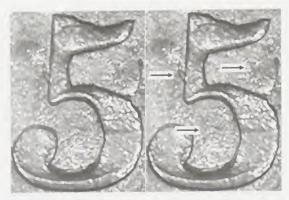


Figure 1 - 1815/2 PCGS MS65+ (Left) & Arrows Added (Right)



Figure 2 – 2 & 5



Figure 3 - 1815 Over an Inverted 5?



Figure 4 - 1815 Over an Inverted 2?

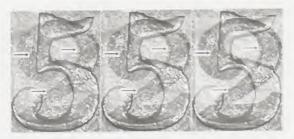


Figure 5 - Overlays Of 2 On Top Of 5/2: Transparency Stages 1, 2 & 3



Figure 6 - 1815/2 PCGS MS65+ (Left) & 5/2 Stage 2 (Right) It Looks Like A Match !!!!



1807 Capped Bust Half Dollar Large and Small Stars By John Dannreuther and John Kraljevich

When John Kraljevich called, he had an interesting question. Was it possible that the punch used for O-111, 112, and 114 (Large Star obverse dies) and O-113 (Small Star obverse die) were the same one? He was cataloging the fabulous Pogue Capped Bust half dollars in New York City at the Stack's Bowers offices. He noted the notch in the thirteenth star (the Reich "signature" per conventional wisdom) appeared to match on each die. The response given was either the same punch was used for both or Reich used one of his other sets. The notched thirteenth star was used on all the dies he created, but he had more than one set of punches, as the dies required different size stars. His star punch sets were left in the Mint when he left in 1817, as the BD-1 of the 1818 half eagle used his notch punch for all 13 stars!

Kraljevich was told that overlays would be done after returning from lunch. Well, he was correct. The punches used for the Large and Small stars dies were from the same set. When the Overton book was published. Al Overton noted that the small stars were 2.75 mm and the large ones were 3 mm. He also noted that the small stars were further from the dentils. Kraljevich had noted that Dannreuther's discovery of the moved stars on the 1849 gold dollar had led him to believe that the Large and Small star half dollars were an optical illusion. He was correct.



1807 Small Stars



1807 Large Stars

However, there was the slight difference in star size noted by Overton and confirmed by Kraljevich's measurements of the coins he was cataloging. After the overlays confirmed the punches used were the same, Dannreuther suggested that the Small star die also had the stars less deeply punched into the die. Each die was finished by hand after hubbing the head into the steel with the obverse having the stars and date added. Also, as can be seen by the overlays, the stars on the Small stars dies are not really further away from the dentils. This is another optical illusion created by the less deeply punched stars.



1807 Small Stars overlay with Large Stars (Stars 1-7)

The overlays also indicated that Reich used a jig to space the stars as the stars 1 through 7 on both dies are nearly aligned. The alignment is not exact, but close enough to suggest a jig was used to space the stars. The jig placed the stars the same distance from the dentils and from each other, of course. The optical illusion makes it seem that the stars are different distances from the dentils.

Visually, the 1849 gold dollars had been separated into "Large Head" and "Small Head" varieties for many years. Dannreuther had discovered that the heads were identical

when viewing the Bass collection in 1999 on a visit to Wolfeboro, New Hampshire. At the time measurements indicated that the "Large Head" was very slightly larger than the "Small Head" and it was attributed at the time to a more deeply punched head, although the same head punch was used. It was several years later when physical overlays were used that Damnreuther noted that it was an optical illusion and the stars had been moved outward and then later inward to create the illusion of large and small heads.



1807 Small Stars overlay with Large Stars (Stars 12-13)

The same is that for the half dollars, although the difference in size of the stars is use attributed to the difference in the punch depth. The overlay of the notched stars indicate that the notch is located in the exact same spot on the star spine. Here are four affections (two Large and two Small) with overlays. Because of the rotation of the protographs, only the one on the left has stars 12 and 13 aligned, but both have star 13 with the notch matching.

50. When your eyes tell you one thing, always be careful. Optical illusions illustrate the Lagar Allen Poe quote that is often misattributed to either Samuel Clemens Mark Iwan or Will Rogers: "Believe nothing you hear, and only one half that you see." It is from an obscure Poe short story. The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether.



2015 Bust Half Dime Census Survey 1792 - 1837 By Stephen A. Crain & Richard Meaney

Longtime collectors of the Bust half dimes, particularly those who have followed these periodic census surveys over the years, will likely notice two significant changes to the general format in this year's census. In the first of these changes I have recruited the very capable assistance of Richard Meaney, who many will recognize as a knowledgeable and insightful collector and student of the Capped Bust half dimes. Richard brings a unique insight into the relative availability, and scarcity, of the various die marriages and remarriages of the series.

The second of these significant changes may or may not be as eagerly embraced as the addition of my coauthor; only time will tell. In the last (2013) Bust Half Dime Condition Census, I presented an idea regarding the methodology used to compile and publish the half dime census, and asked for comments and input from fellow collectors. It has always been the tradition of the JRCS to present the half dime (and all other denomination) census surveys as a list of the fifteen or so most complete and highest grade collections reported. I recall many years ago asking the former half dime census keeper, Russell J. Logan, how the magic number fifteen was chosen for the number of collections reported. Russ looked at me curiously, looked quickly around the room to see if anyone else was eavesdropping on our conversation, and then leaned toward me to disclose perhaps the greatest secret of the JRCS since the secret handshake. He whispered into my ear "That is all that would fit on the page".

While this may satisfy the egos of the fifteen owners of the listed collections, it does little to help other collectors in their pursuit of half dimes. Do we really want to know who possesses the finest collections, or would we rather learn what coins exist, in what grades, and in what quantities? The Liberty Seated Collectors Club (LSCC) has always compiled its census surveys by listing all coins reported as a function of grade, devoid of all owner identities. While still subject to many of the same caveats as the JRCS census surveys, it does present a better picture of the coins of interest in the hands of collectors.

Upon inspection of the accompanying charts, readers will note that the former column headings, with the JRC'S membership numbers of the owners of the fifteen top collections, are conspicuously absent. Instead, the column headings list the grades of all coins reported, in ascending order of grade, with all identity of the coins' owners absent —a census of coins, not of collections.

The accompanying chart represents the best method by which to tabulate *all* of the reported information, including specific remarriages, as reported by participants, while at the same time maintaining the traditional listing of just the basic marriages. In the chart, the reported half dimes are listed first by date, and then tabulated in the white

boxes as the 92 basic L/M die marriages (cross referenced to Valentine numbers. Yes, many collectors still use the Valentine numbers). For those collectors who elected to report specific remarriages, those are reported in the light gray boxes. For those collectors who chose not to report remarriages, their coins are listed in the generic die marriage row. And for the first time, responding to requests from many participants, examples of cuds are now also listed, in the dark gray rows. As cuds are, by definition, very late die states, they are listed below the last remarriage in each case.

Other useful column headings include "TOTAL PIECES", which is the total number of coins reported for each marriage, remarriage, and even cud examples, "HIGHEST GRADE", which is the highest grade coin reported for each marriage, remarriage, and cud, and "MEDIAN GRADE", which is the statistical median for each listing (i.e., half of the coins reported are higher in grade, and half of the coins reported are lower in grade than this grade; this is different from "AVERAGE GRADE").

There are many caveats which should be fully understood before collectors place too much emphasis on the results of this survey, or attempt to apply the results of this or any similar census survey to their collecting pursuits. These limitations, or biases, may be summarized as follows:

- Limited Sampling: This census was open only to JRCS members, and primarily only half dime specialists chose to participate. This represents a very tiny percentage of the total number of collectors, and of the total number of existing half dimes. For example, a total of 13,058,700 Capped Bust half dimes were produced by the Mint during the period of 1829 to 1837. If we assume a very conservative survival rate of just 1%, then 130,587 Capped Bust half dimes would be extant. Yet the approximately 2,293 half dimes reported in this census are just 0,0175% of those. If we use a larger, perhaps more realistic survival rate of 4%, then the half dimes reported in this census represent a mere 0.0043% of the estimated total surviving specimens! In addition, not all collections of CBHD's were reported. The author personally knows of at least a half dozen significant collections of CBHD's that were not reported this year, for one reason or another. Also, the coins reported in this census do not represent a random sampling of what is available to collectors in the market place, but represent only those dates, varieties and grades that collectors chose to purchase for their collections.
- One collector, one coin: Most collectors do not purchase coins in direct proportion to the number available in the marketplace. Collectors typically seek just one example of each date and die marriage, and seldom purchase

additional examples. On the other hand, if a collector determines that a specific issue is scarce or has good investment potential, he may purchase additional examples as duplicates or for trade. Such practices can skew the census, often making scarce issues appear to be more common.

- Grading opinions: All of the grades shown for all of the reported coins are the grades submitted by the owners. As all grading is subjective, there may be no uniformity of grading for the reported coins. Some of the listed coins are graded by various third party grading services (TPG's), and many are raw coins graded by their owners. It is commonly believed that there is as much as a 5 point difference in grading between the seller and the buyer of any given coin, so some discretional latitude should be given to the reported grades.
- Attribution opinions: Like grading, there can also be discrepancies between the attributions assigned by different collectors. Many collectors do not take the time to learn to attribute their half dimes themselves, particularly when distinguishing the often confusing remarriages. They tend to rely on the attributions of the grading services, which have a deplorable record for proper attribution, and should only be accepted with great skepticism, or ignored completely. In addition, too many collectors still attempt to attribute their half dimes using only the photographic plates in the Logan/McCloskey reference, rather than by carefully reading the die state descriptions, and particularly the remarriage charts and all of the valuable information on pages 39 78. Long-time students of the series, who know how to use the remarriage charts, may have a better record of accuracy than those who simply rely on the photographic plates to attribute their coins. In general, the die marriage attributions can be assumed to be accurate, while the die remarriage attributions, particularly for some of the rarest remarriages, may be suspect.
- Upgrading: Many collectors purchase the more difficult die marriages in whatever grade is available at the time, and then seek to upgrade the coin at a later date when available. Once upgraded, collectors often retain the lower grade specimen as a duplicate or for trade. For the more common die marriages, however, collectors may forgo any purchase until the desired grade example comes along. Again, this would tend to skew the census in favor of the scarcer marriages.

 Hoarding: Some collectors develop a particular interest in a specific date, whether for study, investment, or other purpose, and report disproportionate quantities of those dates. These hoards tend to make certain dates, die marriages, die states, or die remarriages appear much more readily available than experience has shown.

With such a small participation in the Flowing Hair and Draped Bust half dime portion of this census, it would be presumptuous of us to even suggest any changes to the relative rarity ratings of any of the thirty-two (32) die marriages based upon the few coins reported. The (119) reported coins comprise a statistical sampling which is simply too small to be of much significance. However, if we look at the early half dime census surveys from 2008, 2011, 2013, and the present 2015 survey, we can perhaps detect a small trend. In the 2008 early half dime census there were no complete collections reported (the most complete comprised just 19 die marriages), but I listed four 'archived' collections which were either complete or nearly complete (32, 30, 29, and 27 die marriages, respectively), but which had been dispersed in recent years. This indicated, at least to me, that there was significant interest in completing this fascinating and historic series at that time. But in the subsequent (2011, 2013, and 2015) surveys there were no complete collections reported; the most complete collection remains at 19 of 32 die marriages. Does this indicate a lessening of interest in this early series? Is the sheer cost of assembling all 32 die marriages sufficient to dissuade collectors from astempting the series? I certainly hope not, and would encourage collectors interested in a serious challenge to pursue this intriguing series. On a positive note, there were falls five (5) examples of the iconic 1792 half disme reported by JRCS members in flux survey.

Members of the JRCS who have studied the Capped Bust half dime census surveys through the years have seen a variety of changes in the rarity ratings for various die marriages and remarriages. Initially, the JRCS used available publications, such as John Reiver's Variety Identification Manual (VIM), to assign rarity to die marriages. Then make August 1992 edition of the John Reich Journal (Volume 6, Issue 1), Russell Logon who was then, among his many other duties and titles in the JRCS, the half lime consus-keeper, asked Mark Smith to share his rarity experience with readers. The array rungs assigned by Mark Smith initiated numerous changes to what had been uccepted by collectors and auction companies' eatalog descriptions for many years.

In the December 2005 issue of the John Reich Journal, the "new census-keeper". Stephen Crain, continued the process of adjustment of die marriage rarity ratings that Russ Logan and Mark Smith had begun thirteen years earlier. Crain also listed Capped

Bust half dime remarriages for the first time. However, the die remarriages were simply listed under their respective die marriage headings without differentiation in rarity from its overall marriage.

It was not until the July 2011 issue of the John Reich Journal that we first saw any adjustments to the rarity for die remarriages. Significant specialist input, in addition to raw census data, made such adjustment possible.

In this 2015 census, we have continued to adjust rarity ratings where it seems appropriate. As readers are well aware, we do not have full knowledge of all die marriages and remarriages extant in all collections, so our rarity estimates are just that estimates. We have conservatively analyzed census data and the input of specialists to produce these estimates.

Rarity ratings for the following capped bust half dimes have been adjusted in this census report (explanation follows):

- 1829 LM-15.2: The die marriage remains an R-4, but the later remarriage is now R-5.
- 1831 LM-1.1: The die marriage remains an R-1, but the earliest remarriage is now R-5.
- 1832 LM-8.3: This remarriage changes from R-5 to R-6.
- 1832 LM-10.3: This remarriage changes from R-5 to R-6.
- 1835 LM-12: This die marriage changes from R-8 to R-7.

The first rarity change listed above, the 1829 LM1-15.2, reflects a lack of examples found in the census (just ten reported), consensus of specialists, and an apparent dearth of specimens to be found for sale at fixed prices or auctions over the past ten years. Daniel Valentine was not even aware of this "later die state" of the LM-15/V-8 die marriage.

We believe the presence of the **1831 LM-1.1** on this list might surprise some people. After all, the 1831 LM-1 is *just an R-1* die marriage. However, the earliest remarriage of the 1831 LM-1 die marriage is quite difficult to locate. In fact, authors Logan and McCloskey labeled this remarriage as "exceedingly rare" in "Federal Half Dimes 1792-1837". We have finally taken the step to assign a rarity rating to this remarriage, but feel that specialists knew all along that this remarriage was a challenge to find in any grade.

In the 2013 census, the **1832** LM-8.3 was assigned a specific rarity rating for the first time. Conservatively, specialists agreed that R-5 was a good estimate until further data

was available. Since then, consensus has shifted to an agreement that the 1832 LM-8.3 is scarcer than the 1832 LM-8.2 (Logan and McCloskey had estimated that the 1832 LM-8.2 was the scarcest of the 1832 LM-8 remarriages). We have assigned a rarity rating of R-6 to the 1832 LM-8.3 to reflect its absolute scarcity (just nine examples reported in this census).

The final remarriage being adjusted in its rarity rating in this census is the 1832 LM-10.3. This remarriage has proven to be quite clusive, with only four examples reported in the most recent census. We believe this remarriage is equal in searcity to the 1832 LM-10.2. At the rating of R-6, we feel the number of extant examples of this remarriage would likely fall into the 13-30 range if we had "perfect data" about all coilestions.

The 1835 LM-12 was the only R-8 die marriage in the last census, with just three examples known. Since 2013, at least two more examples of this die marriage have surfaced and found their way into the collections of specialists. We believe R-7 is a solid estimate for the rarity rating of this most-clusive die marriage.

Of the 32 participants in this year's census, three reported having a "complete set" of 92 92 die marriages, including one collector who also reported having examples of every die remarriage. Two other collectors reported being just one die marriage short of a complete die marriage collection. A number of other collectors had advanced collections with 80 or more die marriages accounted for in their sets.

If we take a moment to speculate on which Capped Bust half dime rarity ratings might abunge in a future census, the crystal ball becomes a bit foggy. Through the haze, perhaps we might envision the 1829 LM-6 die marriage some day being viewed as ar R-4, instead of its current status as an R-5. Although there were just 26 examples reported in this census of the various 1829 LM-6 remarriages, we know that many specialists pass up adding duplicates of this die marriage to their collections because these do not deem the duplicates as valuable as the rarity rating might suggest. Most off the examples seen for sale are of the 1829 LM-6.3 remarriage, as the two earlier colournouses are notably scarcer. The data just do not support adjusting the rarity of the 1829 LM-6.4 set.

Readers are encouraged to contribute research, editorials, opinions, and other information to the John Reich Journal and JR Newsletter on the subject of rarity. We bolive that thorough discussion and consideration of the experiences of multiple collectors is the best way to make reasonable conclusions about the rarity of capped bust half dime die marriages and remarriages.

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| NOM | AU-50 | ~ | | | | _ | - | | | - | - | - | 2 | | | | | m | - | - | | | | - | 2 | + | 3 | 3 | - | |
| | EF-45 | 2 | | | | - | | | | | | | 2 | _ | 2 | 2 | | | | 3 | 2 | | 4 | | - | | 4 | - | 2 | c |
| | EF-40 | 4 | | | | | 2 | | | - | - | - | | - | | | - | | | 4 | | | 4 | en | 4 | | 2 | _ | e | - |
| | F-VF | 6 | | _ | 7 | 7 | m | e | 7 | 2 | - | 2 | m | | 9 | | - | m | | 2 | 7 | | 9 | 10 | 12 | - | 6 | 4 | 0 | c |
| | G-VG | S | 9 | | | | | | 2 | | | | 2 | | - | | - | 00 | | | 3 | | | - | 2 | | | - | - | |
| - | > | 7 | | 9 6 | 4 | | | | | 7 | 4d 7 | 3 2 | | | 5 | 30 6 | 10 7 | 9 | 8 6 | 5 2 | 2 3 | | 6 2 | _ | 5 2 | | ~ | 2 3 | 4 | 2 |
| MAKKIAGE | W | - | (cud) 7 | 2 8 | 3 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.5 (oud) - 4 | 4 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.3 (cud) 3 | 5 | 9 | 6 (cud) 8 | | 8 | 8 (cud) 2 | 9 | 10 1 | 1 | ti(cut) 5 | 2 | 3 2 | 4 | |
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Reverse Shield Element Lines on 1798 Heraldic Eagle Silver Dollars By W. David Perkins, NLG

A JRCS member and collector of the early U.S. silver dollars 1794-1803 by die marriage sent me a note in May 2015 asking me if 1 knew which 1798 dollars had "five stripes" [meaning five vertical lines in the reverse shield], while commenting that pricing guides place a notable premium on this Type. Most Draped Bust, Heraldic Eagle Dollars have four vertical lines on the shield.

This was a good question, and one that would have baffled most of us prior to 1993 when Q. David Bowers book *The Encyclopedia of United States Silver Dollars* was first published. Also, prior to 1993 very few if any collectors required a 1798 dollar with "five vertical lines in the shield" (vs. the much more common four vertical lines) for their early dollar Date and Type Sct. Today, this type is included in the Guide Book (Redbook), Coin Values as published in *Coin World*, and in both the *PCGS Price Guide* and *PCGS Coin Facts*. Advanced type set collectors and pricing guides include 1798 Dollars with a "Knob 9" in the date with four and five vertical lines in the shield, and in addition some choose to add a 1798 Dollar with a "Pointed 9" in the date and five vertical lines in the shield.

The American Numismatic Rarities June 30, 2005 The Cardinal Collection sale offered what was perhaps the first collection offered for sale via public auction that included examples of these different shield line varieties as part of a Date and Type collection of early dollars. [Those who collect by die marriage strive for all of these and therefore indirectly include one or more examples of each of these types.]

What is the significance of the "Knob 9" variety? Which die marriages for 1798 silver dollars come with five vertical lines in the shield? Any why do they realize a premium price today?

Most likely the first die marriages struck for 1798 dated silver dollars were the two Draped Bust Obverse, Small Eagle Reverse Dollars, 1798 B-1, BB-82 and 1798 B-2, BB-81. The 9 in the date for these two 1798 die marriages was stuck from a punch (or punches) with a "Knob 9" that was used in creating the obverse dies for all of the known 1795 to 1798 Draped Bust, Small Eagle Dollars. The Knob 9 has a rounded knob on the end of the lower tail of the 9.

A Knob 9 punch was used also in striking six of 32 total die marriages for the Draped Bust, Heraldic Eagle Dollars for 1798. 1798 Dollars with the Knob 9 are believed by most specialists to be the first of the Draped Bust, Heraldic Eagle Reverse dollars struck for 1798.

An example of the 1798 "Knob 9 dollar" (with Heraldic Eagle Reverse) has long been collected as part of a date and major type set of early dollars, along with a specimen of the 1798 "Pointed tail 9." For example, the Amon G. Carter, Jr., Harold L. Bareford and Louis E. Eliasberg collections all had an example of the 1798 Knob 9, Draped Bust, Heraldic Eagle dollar as part of their early dollar type sets.

Three obverse dies with the Knob 9 and one obverse with the Pointed 9 were mated with two different Heraldie Eagle reverse dies that have five vertical lines in the elements of the reverse shield. All other Heraldie Eagle reverse dies for 1798 have four vertical elements in the shield, as do all of the reverse dies used in striking dollars dated 1799-1803.

The following die marriages for 1798 Knob 9 dollars have five vertical lines in the shield: 1798 B-4, BB-92; B-6, BB-96; and 1798 B-32, BB-91. The 1798 B-4, BB-92 and B-32, BB-91 marriages share a common reverse die. This die was first used in creating 1798 B-32, BB-91.

Only one die marriage is known with a Pointed 9 in the date mated to a reverse die with five vertical lines in the shield. This is 1798 B-17, BB-101. The 1798 B-17 die marriage shares a common reverse die with (the Knob 9) 1798 B-6, BB-96. This reverse die was first used in striking the 1798 B-6, BB-96 Knob 9 die marriage.

In summary, there are only two different reverse dies known with five vertical lines in the shield, with a total of four 1798 dollar die marriages having five vertical lines in the shield. Pricing is not so straight forward, as you will see.

The Gnide Book (or Redbook) offers prices in various grades for the four and five line types as follows, "1798 Knob 9, 5 Vertical Lines," "1798 Knob 9, 4 Vertical Lines," and "1798 Pointed 9, 5 Vertical Lines,"

Coin World's Coin Prices has prices for "1798 Knob 9, 5 Vertical Lines in Shield," "1798 Knob 9, 4 Vertical Lines in Shield," and "1798 Pointed 9, 5 Vertical Lines in Shield."

The PCGS Price Guide lists two different types with the Knob 9 obverse, "1798 Knob 9, 5 Lines" and "1798 Knob 9." It also lists in a third eategory a "1798 5 Stripes" type. PCGS does not list the "1798 Pointed 9, 5 stripes" type as a separate type. It is included in under the 1798 5 Stripes type.

The result of PCGS having the three categories as defined above is that there is some overlap. The "1798 Knob 9" category (by definition) includes 1798 Knob 9 dollars with both four and five stripe reverses, while the "1798 Knob 9, 5 Lines" category includes only Knob 9 varieties with 5 vertical stripes in the shield

If you study the PCGS photos and auction appearances along with the individual coins included in the early dollar PCGS Registry sets, you will see that the listings for both of these types are mostly made up of coins with Knob 9 obverse dies, with some examples of the "1798 Pointed 9, 5 Stripes (1798 B-17, BB-101) included.

The PCGs Price Guide prices by grade for the Knob 9 Type are higher than the prices for the 1798 Knob 9, 5 Lines Type, yet in many cases listed auction prices for coins in both of these types are for coins of the exact same die marriage.

As to the listing and pricing of these types, in my experience and opinion none of these three sources have it completely right across the board. My thoughts relative to pricing are,

The key to understanding how the three Knob 9 dollars with five stripes should be priced has to be based largely on the prices realized for the 1798 B-6, BB-96 die marriage, simply because it is the most common of the three Knob 9 die marriages with the five vertical lines in the shield. It is also the most common 1798 Knob 9, Draped Bust, Heraldic Eagle Dollar.

And if a price guide includes the 1798 Pointed 9, 5 Vertical Line type, the price for this type has to be constructed around the price of the 1798 B-17, BB-101 die marriage as it is the only Pointed 9 dollar with the five stripe reverse.

Relative to Rarity and Condition Rarity, all of these marriages except 1798 B-6, BB-96 are quite rare. Despite the R-3 rarity rating, it is still not an easy task to locate a choice example of the 1798 B-6, BB-96 die marriage in XF, AU or Mint State grades. Following is a short analysis and commentary, by die marriage:

1798 B-4, BB-92. Knob 9, Five Lines. Strong R-5: There is only one specimen known to me in Mint State, a stunning PCGS MS63 example in the

Miller Collection. This specimen is the finest known 1798 Knob 9 Dollar, the finest known 1798 Knob 9 Dollar with 5 Lines in the shield, and is the finest and only Mint State example known for this die marriage! There are two NGC AUS0 examples known to me, along with one raw AU specimen in my collection (it's been raw since I purchased it this way over a decade ago). AU and XF examples are not easy to find, especially in nice condition and with nice eye appeal. Examples in higher grades typically sell for a premium, and if XF or AU and choice for the grade, should sell for a large premium.

1798 B-6, BB-96. Knob 9, Five Lines. R-3: There are at least two Mint State examples known to me, the Eliasberg and Cardinal Specimens. The Eliasberg Specimen is graded NGC MS63 and the Cardinal specimen is PCGS MS61. The Eliasberg Specimen is probably the finest known for the die marriage, but not for the Knob 9 Type.

Note that there are three specimens of 1798 B-6, BB-96 that are listed as MS60 in the second edition of the Bowers Encyclopedia under Notable Specimens. I have not viewed these coins in person, nor have most vollectors today as they were sold at public anction a long time ago. They may or may not grade Mint State today. For example, the Robison specimen valled MS60 in the Bowers book was offered in a Superior Sale September 1996-952 [same coin, by plate match] where it was graded AU50.]

Examples in XF-AU grades can be found, but again, are very hard to find in a "choice for the grade" condition.

1798 B-32, BB-91. Knob 9, Five Lines. High R-6: This die marriage was unknown to Haseltine. There are only 13 specimens known to me today. There is one example graded PCGS MS61 and a raw AU in my collection which I purchased this way in 1996. The PCGS MS61 example last realized over \$30,000 at public auction in the Hesselgesser sale. There are three examples known to me grading XF. I have seen all but one of these (an XF40 in the JRC'S Early Dollar Census), and have owned three of the five over the years. Even lower grade examples of this die marriage sell at substantial premiums; an exceptional and very Choice VF example of this die marriage was sold by me privately for a low five figure price in 2014.

1798 B-17, BB-101. Pointed 9, Five Lines. Medium to High R-5: This is a rare die marriage, and with maybe only a half dozen examples known in AU grades, and NONE in Mint State. The finest known may be the ex. World's Greatest Collection-Bolender-Matthews Specimen graded NGC AU55 today. There are four examples graded AU53 and one in AU50. The Guide Book prices this in MS60 at \$25,000. Coin World prices this Type at \$22,500 in AU58. This die marriage is unknown in these grades, or higher.

In my opinion, PCGS should add the 1798 "Pointed 9, 5 Lines" Dollar with a new coin (holder) number, and add this coin to the appropriate Registry Set or Sets.

The 1798 B-17, BB-101 die marriage, especially in XF45 and AU grades, typically has sold for a premium.

Here is summary of the three die marriages that comprise the 1798 Knob 9, Four Lines Type:

1798 B-3, BB-94. Knob 9, Four Lines. R-5: This is a rare die marriage, with two examples known to me in Mint State and only 2 or 3 in AU. Even nice examples in XF45 are virtually impossible to locate.

1798 B-5, BB-93. Knob 9, Four Lines. R-6: This is a very rare die marriage. All except one example are known with a heavy vertical die break bisecting the right one third of the reverse. No Mint State examples are known to me, with only a handful or so known in XF and AU grades. This die marriage gets a large premium when examples infrequently come up for sale.

1798 B-7, BB-93. Knob 9, Four Lines. High R-5: This is another rare die marriage which if not easy obtainable in higher grades or in nice condition. The finest example known to me is graded NGC AU58. The next best examples grade XF45, with only 2 or 3 known to me in this grade.

As you can see, all of these three die marriages are rare to very rare, and are in demand as both a type coin and a die marriage / die variety.

In general, pricing should be studied in all three guides mentioned in this article, with attention being paid to both rarity and condition rarity, and the prices in these three categories relative to each other.

Pricing guides frequently have the 5 shield line variety priced the same or higher. I believe that the "1798 Knob 9, 4 Lines" type coins should be priced slightly higher than the "Knob 9, 5 Lines" silver dollars as the 1798 B-6, BB-96 die marriage with 5 lines is the most common Knob 9 die marriage with 5 Lines in the shield. And in my opinion, all Knob 9 dollars, with and without five stripes, should be priced somewhat higher than the more common die marriages of 4 Stripes, Pointed 9 dollars.

Most of the guide prices I've seen for the 1798 "Pointed 9, 5 Stripes" variety (1798 B-17, BB-101 die marriage) in general are low, and are particularly low in AU grades. This variety is sometimes priced in a Mint State grade, but is unknown to me in this grade. I personally believe that pricing should be blank (indicated "with a dash") for grades where there are no examples known.

As always, your feedback is welcome. I can be reached at wdperki@attglobal.net.



1798 Knob 9 and Pointed 9 Photo - 1798 Knob 9 and 1798 Pointed 9 Date Comparison.

Photo courtesy of PCGS.



4 VERTICAL LINES

5 VERTICAL LINES

1798 DB HE Dollars with 4 and 5 Shield Lines - Reverse of 1798 Draped Bust, Heraldic Eagle Dollars with four and five vertical shield lines. *Photo courtesy of PCGS*.



1798 Knob 9 B4 Finest Known - 1798 B-4, BB-92 Dollar Knob 9 with five vertical shield lines. This Specimen is from the Miller Collection and is the finest known 1798 B-4, BB-92 Dollar, the finest known 1798 Knob 9 Dollar, and the finest known 1798 Dollar with five lines in the shield. *Photo courtesy of PCGS*.



1798 B17 Reverse - Reverse of 1798 B-17a, BB-101 Dollar.

Photo courtesy of Ira and Larry Goldberg Coins.



1798 B17 Obverse - Obverse of 1798 B-17a, BB-101 Dollar, ex. WGC-Bolender and Bolender Plate, Matthews. This is probably the finest known example of the die marriage, and of the 1798 Pointed 9, 5 Lines Type. Photo contexy of Ira and Larry Goldberg Coins.



Contemporary Counterfeit Bust DimesBy Winston Zack

Around January 2014 I began two major numismatic projects 1) Bust Dime Variety Identification Manual (to be released at the August 2015 ANA show) and 2) researching and recording 19th century contemporary counterfeiting of U.S. coins using historical documents and the surviving counterfeit coins (ongoing). Here I discuss the second of these two projects, with a particular emphasis on Bust dime counterfeiting. I first presented on Bust dime counterfeits at the 2015 Portland ANA show at the JRCS meeting. This article is an extension of that presentation.

The main sources of information for this research were the Library of Congress (2015) and ancestry.com (2015) websites (there are other websites that have these similar resources). These websites were particularly valuable given that they have millions of newspapers which have been scanned with optical character recognition (OCR) technology. OCR allows characters, such as letters and words, to be recognized when a document is scanned and when a key word search is conducted. This is not perfect technology, especially for older documents with unusual letter characters (such as the letter 'S' looking like an 'f'), but it is fairly accurate and reliable. Combined, the size, age range of historical newspapers which have been scanned, and OCR technology allows for a much easier search for this historical documentation.

The Library of Congress website has newspapers limited to as far back as 1836. But the ancestry.com website goes further back to at least the 18th century. Yet, these sources differ in their completeness, and neither source contains identical newspapers, thus both were searched.

Three keyword searches were used: 1) 'counterfeit coin', 2) 'bogus coin', and 3) 'spurious coin'. These are assumed to be the most common words at the time expressing counterfeit coins. Other terms, such as 'queer', 'bad' and 'false' were used at the time but have so far not been used in this research. There are possibly other words that could have been used to describe counterfeit coins at this time.

Bust Dimes and their Counterfeits

Bust dimes were coined at the U.S. Mint from 1796 to 1837. Draped Bust, Small Eagle reverse dimes were minted in 1796 and 1797. Draped Bust, Heraldic Eagle reverse dimes were minted from 1798 and 1807. Capped Bust dimes were minted from 1809 and 1837. In addition, Bust dimes were not minted every year.

Draped Bust dimes, with the exception of 1805 and 1807, had very small reported mintages of 8k to 35k pieces. 1805 and 1807 both had mintages of 120k and 165k, respectively. Yet these mintages pale in comparison to most Capped Bust dime dates which generally had mintages of 400k or more. In theory, it would have been rarer to see a Bust dime in circulation before 1820 than after this date. As such, it is hypothesized that counterfeiters are more likely to counterfeit a coin that could easily blend in to the circulating coinage of the time. And, not surprisingly, the earliest recorded date on a presumed contemporary counterfeit Bust dime is from 1825, with the majority of known examples dated to the 1830's (see Table 1 for a list of contemporary counterfeit Bust dimes).

| Date | Variety | Est. Composition | Die type | Manufacturing Method | Reeded (RE) or Plain edge (PE) | # of reeds (if known) | Quantity Reported |
|------|-----------------|------------------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1825 | JR-1 or JR-4 | 1m or lead () | Transfer | Cast | 11 | 1.4 | |
| | | | | Die struck (2) | 1.4 | 1.4 | |
| | IR-4 (*) | | Transfer? | | PE | None | |
| | 1 A | | Hand-cut | Die struck | N.A. | NI | |
| | | | Hand-cut | Die struck | 1.1 | 11 | |
| | | | Transfer | | 1.4 | NI | |
| | | | Hand-cut | Die struck | 11 | | |
| | | | Hand-cut | Die struck | N 4 | 11 | |
| | | | | Die struck | RE | | |
| | | | | Cast | RE | VI | |
| | | | | | NA | | |
| | | | | Die struck | NA | | |
| | | | | Die struck | RE | 141 | |
| | | (unknown) | Transfer | Cast ^o | NA | 11 | |

Table 1. Counterfeit Bust Dimes

Historical Record

The historical record for counterfeit Bust dimes is very small. This may come as little surprise to those readers who have never seen or heard of one before. On the other hand, the vast majority of U.S. coins which were counterfeited at this time were the Bust half dollars (Davignon, 2010). Bust halves arguably had much higher mintages and circulated more thoroughly. Counterfeit Bust quarters and half-dimes also have a very small historical record, and very few of these are known to exist today; this author has yet to locate any historical record of counterfeit Bust dollars or confirm their existence.

At the moment, the earliest account of a counterfeit Bust dime in circulation comes from the Maryland Gazette dated August 27, 1829. It reads:

We were yesterday shown a counterfelt Dime, mails apparently of lead, and the impression wretchedly executend. The deception is so gross, that it can scarcely impose upon any one possessed of the least-discernment. We should not suppose, possibly, that many of them could be thrown into circulation. Rich. Compiler.

Figure 1.

Translated to "We were yesterday shown a counterfeit Dime, made apparently of lead, and the impression wretchedly executed—the deception is so gross, that it can scarcely impose upon any one possessed of the least discernment. We should not suppose, possibly, that many of them could be thrown into circulation. Rich Compiler."

Four additional newspaper accounts, dated between 1835 and 1839, on counterfeit Bust dimes in circulation and the arrest of a group of counterfeiters in 1836 have so far been found. All five newspaper accounts come from Maryland, New York and Pennsylvania. This may suggest that counterfeiting dimes was taking place in larger urban areas. Although pure conjecture, larger cities allow for coins to easily be passed off to strangers, possibly immigrants who were likely naïve about U.S. coinage.

Counterfeit 'Families'

Counterfeit 'families' are counterfeit die marriages which share a common die (obverse or reverse) and/or share common die characteristics (letters, numbers, devices). It is generally unknown where specific counterfeits were produced. Further, it would have taken a skilled engraver to produce decent counterfeit dies. As such, one engraver could have made counterfeit dies for multiple gangs. Therefore, the term 'family' is used because it cannot always be known whether counterfeits were made by one person gang or by multiple gangs but with a common counterfeit engraver between them.

Some counterfeit families are easier to piece together than others, especially if one side (generally the reverse die) was used to produce multiple die marriages, and thus creating an emission order. It is reasonably hypothesized that if one engraver was making counterfeit dies for multiple gangs, those gangs would not be swapping dies between themselves. Therefore, the dies likely remained in a static location or with a common gang. If a family can be established, but an emission order cannot, this does not necessarily indicate they were made by different gangs. It could be that specific dies were used to produce only specific die marriages. On the other hand, some counterfeit die marriages may have been produced but have yet to be reported or no longer survive today, thereby possibly breaking an emission order sequence.

There are many families known in the counterfeit Bust half dollar series, but there are none known from the counterfeit Bust quarter series (Rea et al., 2010); it is unknown if there is a family in the counterfeit Bust half-dime series because no information has yet been published on these pieces. Yet, interestingly, there is at least one family known in the counterfeit Bust dime series.

The one known counterfeit Bust dime family is composed of four die marriages: 1831 1/A, 1833 1/A, 1833 1/B, and 1834 1/C (shown



below), and all reported pieces are weakly struck. Three obverse and three reverse dies are known. Both 1833 marriages share the same obverse, and the 1831 LA and 1833 LA share a common reverse. This creates a die marriage sequence for three of the four known marriages and four of the six known dies (figure 1). This sequence is not necessarily the emission order for these pieces, although one of the two known 1831 LA dime counterfeits is known without a rusty (or pitted) reverse die suggesting this die was used before the 1833 LA die counterfeits.

Figure 2. Counterfeit Bust dime die marriage and die usage family relationship.

Contemporary Counterfeit Bust Dimes

The obverse dies are composed of very similar devices. For one, the portrait of Liberty appears to be identical on all the dies. The stars are all six-pointed with square tips; 1833 1'A looks like it has pointed-tip stars, but that is likely due to environmental factors. The numbers are generally identical. The 1's are tall and pointy and generally missing the lower right base. The 8's resemble the 'fancy 8' style and may all originate from the same punch-type. The 3's may also be from the same punch-type, although there's enough subtle variation between the marriages that this may not be true. It is a bit unusual that a '4' punch was used since it is not as universal as the 1, 8, or 3 punches were.

The reverse dies, in contrast, are composed of generally different devices, suggesting more effort was expended to make these dies. First, there are three different eagle punches. The eagle would have been a very intricate and time consuming device to make. This may suggest that the eagle punch broke while making or after making the dies. The scroll, although well worn, appears as though it could be from the same punch used on all three dies. Finally, the letters share some similar characteristics, but given the unevenness in which these counterfeits were struck, it is difficult to match these letters until more, higher grade examples are reported.



1831 1/A



Fantasy Dates

It is always interesting that fantasy-dated counterfeits were produced. This may suggest the counterfeiters were naïve about the coins they were counterfeiting. There is some evidence to suggest counterfeiters in different countries made fantasy-dated counterfeits of U.S. coins; this would put more weight towards the counterfeiter naivety in counterfeiting another countries coinage. Yet, it is still entirely plausible that domestic counterfeiters were also naïve about the dates produced for different coin series and denominations.

There are at least two Bust dime counterfeits with fantasy dates on them – 1826 and 1838. There is only one reported 1826 dated counterfeit dime, and unfortunately it is in very poor condition to study. The 1838, on the other hand, is actually the most common surviving counterfeit Bust dime. These are generally evenly struck, although the devices come very flatly struck possibly suggesting that the devices may have been impressed too deeply into the die.



Conclusion

Counterfeit Bust dimes are surprisingly more numerous and diverse than initially suspected when beginning this research. They come cast and die struck, and made from transfer dies and hand-cut dies. There is at least one known counterfeit die family. And counterfeiting this denomination was a big enough issue that at least five newspapers reported them over a ten year time span.

The benefits of counterfeiting Bust dimes include that they are a small denomination which may make them less prone to scrutiny, especially with smaller design details on the coin. Bust dimes, in general, were probably relatively common in circulation, especially in the 1830's where the counterfeits could more easily blend into commerce. There were lots of other foreign coins circulating at this time, and that diversity may have made it difficult to keep track of all the different types and designs of coins in circulation. The metals and alloys used to make these counterfeits (i.e. lead, tin, German silver) were cheap enough to make a decent profit. The counterfeiters likely operated in larger cities where they could pass off their counterfeits to an unsuspecting person and disappear back into the masses.

The risks of counterfeiting Bust dimes are that it was an expensive, time consuming operation, and you needed to counterfeit enough dimes to make it worthwhile. As always, there is the risk of being caught which in turn meant fines and lengthy prison sentences.

Given that most of the recorded Bust dime counterfeits are dated to the 1830's conforms to the evidence from counterfeit Bust half dollars (CCCBHCC, 2015; Davignon, 2010) and quarters (Rea et al., 2010). This suggests something was driving massive counterfeiting of 71.S. denominations in the 1830's with relatively little counterfeiting prior to this decade.

This research continues to advance and is just a sliver of massive amounts of information on counterfeiting at this time. A special thanks goes out to David Kahn, lames Matthews, Kirk Gorman, Gerry Fortin and John Kraljevich for supplying examples and or images of counterfeit Bust dimes. If you own any counterfeit Bust dimes (or other denominations) which you believe could be contemporary, or if you have any historical documentation on Bust dimes or other Bust denomination, please contact me at: stoneman101/atgmail.com.

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